

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CARACA 12472 210138Z

64/70

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00

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O 202205Z OCT 76 CORRECTED FOR MRN

FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 5271

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (MRN 12472 VICE 02472)

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, VE

SUBJECT: PRESS QUERIES RE CUBANA CASE

1. MONTY HAYS, REPORTER FOR CARACAS' ENGLISH LANGUAGE NEWSPAPER DAILY JOURNAL, CALLED EMBASSY INFORMATION OFFICER THIS EVENING TO INQUIRE ABOUT PRESS REPORTS FROM TRINIDAD "LINKING EMBASSY'S LEGAL ATTACHE WITH THE TWO VENEZUELAN BEING HELD THERE." THE QUOTES ARE FROM HAYS. THE IO RESPONDED THAT "THE EMBASSY HAS NO INFORMATION ON HOW OR WHY THE NAME OF ITS LEGAL ATTACHE CAME INTO POSSESSION OF ONE OF THE VENEZUELAN BEING HELD IN TRINIDAD."

2. WHEN THE REPORTER PRESSED THE IO ABOUT JOE LEO, WHOM HE KNEW TO BE THE LEGAL ATTACHE, HE WAS TOLD THAT "MR. LEO HAS BEEN ASSIGNED TO CARACAS SINCE 1970. HIS JOB IS TO FOLLOW UP ON VIOLATORS OF U.S. FEDERAL LAWS AND TO COOPERATE WITH THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND INTERPOL."

3. HAYS INSISTED ON KNOWING IF LEO KNEW HERNAN RICARDO LOZANO. THE IO TOLD HIM THAT "YES, MR. LEO DID KNOW RICARDO CASUALLY. A FEW YEARS AGO, RICARDO WAS REFERRED TO HIM FOR ASSISTANCE WITH A VISA CASE. LAST SEPTEMBER RICARDO ONCE AGAIN CALLED ON LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MR. LEO TO HELP HIM OBTAIN A VISA FOR HIMSELF. RICARDO SAID

HE NEEDED THE VISA TO TRAVEL TO PUERTO RICO AS A JOURNALIST.
HE WAS COVERING A STORY FOR VISION MAGAZINE." HAYS ASKED IF
RICARDO GOT THE VISA IN SEPTEMBER.
THE IO REPLIED, "I DON'T KNOW."

4. THE STORY WILL APPEAR
IN TOMORROW MORNING'S (THURSDAY) EDITION OF THE DAILY JOURNAL
AND MOST LIKELY WILL BE PICKED UP BY THE NEWS AGENCIES
HERE AS WELL AS THE LOCAL PRESS.
VAKY

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